

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

**SUMMARY OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

Teleconference: 866-299-3188/9195415544#

May 21, 2014; 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. EDT

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB or Board) teleconference was held on May 21, 2014. The agenda for this meeting is provided as Attachment A, a list of the participants is provided as Attachment B, and action items from the teleconference are included as Attachment C. The official certification of the minutes by the Chair or Vice-Chair is included as Attachment D.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. OPENING REMARKS

Ms. Michelle Wade, Vice Chair of ELAB, and Ms. Lara Phelps, Designated Federal Official of ELAB, welcomed participants to the teleconference and called an official roll of the Board members and guests.

2. APPROVAL OF APRIL MINUTES

Ms. Wade asked whether any members had comments regarding the April minutes; none were offered. Dr. Mahesh Pujari moved to accept the minutes, and Mr. Dave Speis seconded the motion. The Board approved the April minutes unanimously with no discussion and one abstention.

3. UPDATES ON CURRENT TOPICS

Dr. Pujari introduced the letter to Mr. Lem Walker (EPA) regarding the preservation and analysis requirements for acrolein and acrylonitrile. The letter recommends that either Method 603 be removed from 40 CFR Part 136 or a statement be added that Method 624 is preferred strongly to Method 603. The letter also requests that EPA consider the preservation requirements for acrolein and acrylonitrile. Mr. Jack Farrell asked whether Method 624 has the appropriate sensitivity. Dr. Pujari responded that laboratories would use Method 624 with the quality control (QC) criteria of Method 603. Mr. John Phillips thought that Method 624 was as sensitive as Method 603 because of the improved sensitivity of mass spectrometers during the past 10 to 15 years; he suggested adding a statement to the letter regarding this improvement.

Dr. Dallas Wait asked about the differences in purging efficiencies and methodologies between Methods 603 and 624. Dr. Pujari responded that there are some differences. Dr. Wait did not think that Method 624 could meet the purging requirements of Method 603. Dr. Pujari said that his experience with acrolein and acrylonitrile in this area have been good. Despite Dr. Pujari's experience, Dr. Wait thought that there might be some resistance to the recommendation as currently outlined in the letter. To address this, the letter should include data from a method validation study that demonstrates that the detection limits, when operating under the normal

parameters of Method 624, meet data quality objectives. Mr. Phillips agreed that it would be beneficial to include data to demonstrate that the sensitivities are equivalent with Method 624 purging. Dr. Michael Wichman requested that the phrase “may be analyzed by Method 624” be changed to “may be determined by Method 624” in the second sentence under the first issue addressed in the letter.

Mr. Speis thought that the paragraph on aromatics needed additional support because there is not enough information in the letter to convince EPA to follow the recommendation. Drs. Wait and Wichman agreed that adding as much supporting data as possible would be beneficial. Dr. Pujari agreed to add supporting data to the letter, which the Board will discuss again during its June meeting.

Ms. Wade reported that Mr. Walker had forwarded the Board’s letter about the Method Update Rule to Mr. Adrian Hanley (EPA), who is in charge of the update. Ms. Wade and Ms. Patsy Root have spoken to Mr. Hanley, who will respond to ELAB’s offer of assistance within the next few weeks.

Dr. Pujari explained that he had not convened a Task Group meeting regarding the polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) issue because Dr. Richard Burrows has not been available. Mr. Speis recommended that Dr. Pujari email all of the Task Group members to determine when a majority can meet via teleconference. Mr. Phillips added that it would be helpful to convene before the next Board meeting in June. Dr. Pujari will try to schedule a Task Group meeting prior to the June ELAB meeting.

Dr. Wait explained that he had drafted a letter to the Agency regarding harmonizing methods in four potential areas. The first area is harmonization of QC methods, such as calibration curves. The second area is the harmonization of terminology, which is used loosely throughout various EPA methods. The Board’s letter references the 2010 document developed by the Forum on Environmental Measurements regarding the various terms used throughout the Agency. The third area of potential harmonization outlined in the letter is harmonization of technical approaches, and the final area encourages EPA offices to adopt new methods developed by other Agency offices. The letter ultimately suggests that EPA staff meet with Board members during the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation in August to determine whether ELAB can assist the Agency with its method harmonization opportunities. Mr. Speis and Mr. Phillips agreed with the language of the letter as written. In response to a question from Dr. Wait, Ms. Phelps explained that the letter would be from Ms. Root on behalf of ELAB to EPA. Mr. Phillips moved that the Board approve the letter via email following Ms. Kristen LeBaron’s editorial review and addition of a distribution list. Dr. Wichman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Phillips said that the Task Group regarding the Interagency Data Quality Task Force and data quality objectives had met via teleconference earlier in the month, with the goal of presenting any progress by the Board’s face-to-face meeting in August 2014.

4. NEW TOPICS/ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Ms. Phelps explained that she still is working on the new ELAB membership package. Following the membership announcement in the *Federal Register*, Ms. Phelps received 11 new

applications. Of these applications, 10 are viable, and one lacks pertinent background information. Academic community representation continues to be an area of concern, with none of the applications coming from this community. Ms. Phelps would be interested in hearing advice from Board members about how to better reach the academic research community. Dr. James Seiber recommended the American Chemical Society, which releases a weekly newsletter, as a conduit to academic researchers. Dr. Wait recommended that a notice be published in the American Chemical Society's *Chemical and Engineering News* because many academics do not regularly read the *Federal Register*. Dr. Seiber said that alerts regarding any research needed in certain areas of method development would receive the attention of the academic community. Ms. Phelps explained that of the 11 applications, three were from the government community, four from the laboratory community, and four from the "other" community category. Ms. Wade noted that some state environmental groups communicate with universities, so these groups could be another avenue to reach academic researchers.

Mr. Phillips noted that the field operations guidelines that Ms. Phelps provided to the members reference a March 1, 2013, memorandum from EPA's Acting Administrator. Mr. Phillips asked whether it was possible to obtain a copy of the memorandum, as it appears to be the driver for the guidelines. Ms. Phelps explained that the memorandum was the catalyst for the time table and requirements for Agency compliance. She was not sure whether it was released publicly and will research whether she is able to share it with the Board. One condition of sharing might be that ELAB members must agree not to distribute it outside of the Board.

5. WRAP-UP/REVIEW ACTION ITEMS

Ms. LeBaron reviewed the action items identified during the meeting, which are included in Attachment C.

6. CLOSING REMARKS/ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:54 p.m.

Attachment A

AGENDA
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD

Monthly Teleconference: 866-299-3188/9195415544#

May 21, 2014; 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. (EDT)

Opening Remarks	Phelps/Wade
Approval of April Minutes	Wade
Updates on Current Topics	All
Method Update Rule	
Polychlorinated Biphenyls	
Methods Harmony	
Interagency Data Quality Task Force/Data Quality Objectives Process	
New Topics/Issues for Consideration	Wade
Wrap-Up/Review Action Items	Wade/LeBaron
Closing Remarks/Adjourn	Phelps/Wade

Attachment B**MEMBERSHIP LISTING AND GUESTS****ELAB TELECONFERENCE****May 21, 2014; 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EDT**

Attendance (Y/N)	Name	Affiliation
N	Ms. Patsy Root (Chair)	IDEXX Laboratories, Inc. Representing: Laboratory Product Developers
Y	Ms. Michelle L. Wade (Vice-Chair)	Kansas Department of Health and the Environment Representing: Laboratory Accreditation Bodies
Y	Ms. Lara P. Phelps, DFO	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Representing: EPA
N	Dr. Richard Burrows	TestAmerica Laboratories, Inc. Representing: Commercial Laboratory Industry
Y	Ms. Patricia M. Carvajal	San Antonio River Authority Representing: Watershed/Restoration
Y	Mr. John (Jack) E. Farrell, III	Analytical Excellence, Inc. Representing: The NELAC Institute (TNI)
N	Ms. Ruth L. Forman	Environmental Standards, Inc. Representing: Large Third-Party Assessors
N	Ms. Sylvia (Silky) S. Labie	Environmental Laboratory Consulting & Technology, LLC Representing: Third-Party Assessors
N	Ms. Susan L. Mazur	Florida Power and Light Representing: Utility Water Act Group
Y	Mr. John H. Phillips	Ford Motor Company Representing: Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers
Y	Dr. Mahesh P. Pujari	City of Los Angeles Representing: National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA)
Y	Dr. James N. Seiber	University of California, Davis Representing: Academic and Research Communities
Y	Ms. Aurora Shields	City of Lawrence, Kansas Representing: Wastewater Laboratories
Y	Mr. David (Dave) N. Speis	QC Laboratories Representing: American Council of Independent Laboratories (ACIL)
Y	Dr. A. Dallas Wait	Gradient Representing: Consumer Products Industry
Y	Dr. Michael D. Wichman	State Hygienic Laboratory at the University of Iowa Representing: Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL)

Attendance (Y/N)	Name	Affiliation
Y	Ms. Kristen LeBaron (Contractor)	The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc. (SCG)
Y	Dr. Mike Delaney (Guest)	Massachusetts Water Resources Authority

Attachment C

ACTION ITEMS

1. Ms. LeBaron will finalize the April 2014 meeting minutes and send them to Ms. Phelps via email.
2. Dr. Pujari will make the suggested changes to the letter regarding acrolein and acrylonitrile, and the Board will discuss the revised letter during its June meeting.
3. Dr. Pujari will schedule a PCB Task Group meeting prior to the June Board meeting.
4. Ms. LeBaron will format and edit the methods harmonization letter, and the Board will approve it via email after a distribution list has been added.
5. Ms. Phelps will determine whether the memorandum of March 1, 2013, from the Acting EPA Administrator regarding the field operations guidelines can be shared with the Board.

Attachment D

I hereby certify that this is the final version of the minutes for the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board Meeting held on May 21, 2014.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle L. Wade". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "M" and "W".

Signature Chair

Mrs. Michelle L. Wade

Print Name Chair